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The Classical Weekly

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LUCRETIUS 1. 1-23

(A Study in Interpretation and Punctuation)

Lucretius 1.1-28, the opening sentence of the *De Rerum Natura*, I would punctuate as follows:

- Aeneadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas,
alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa
quae mare navigerum, quae terras frugiferentis
concelebras, per te quoniam genus omne animantum
5 concipitur visitque exortum lumina solis—
te, dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila caeli
adventumque tuum, tibi suavis daedala tellus
summittit flores, tibi rident aequora ponti
placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum,
10 nam simul ac species patefactast verna diei
et reserata viget genitabilis aura Favoni,
aeriae primum volucres te, diva, tuumque
significant initum percussae corda tua vi,
inde ferae pecudes persultant pabula laeta
15 et rapidos tranant amnis (ita capta lepore
te sequitur cupide quo quamque inducere pergis),
denique per maria ac montis fluviosque rapacis
frondiferasque domos avium camposque virentis
omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem
20 efficit ut cupide generatim saecla propagent—
quae quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas
nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
exoritur neque fit laetum neque amabile quicquam,
te sociam studeo scribendis versibus esse
25 quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor
Memmiadae nostro, quem tu, dea, tempore in omni
omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus,
quo magis aeternum da dictis, diva, leporem.

At the bottom of this proposed repunctuation two principles lie: (1) punctuation is a most important adjunct to interpretation—an adjunct of which classical scholars avail themselves all too seldom; (2) the ancients thought in far longer groups of words than our modern system of pointing classical texts allows us, as a rule, to realize. See my remarks in *American Journal of Philology* 31 (1910), 72, note 1. The movement from the Roman system, with its practically complete absence of punctuation, to our highly complex modern system of (over)punctuation has at times brought serious losses, through hindrances to sound interpretation. Scholars trained through long years to a given punctuation find it hard to accept a new one. And yet some very brilliant contributions to classical scholarship have been made by way of changes in the punctuation.

In our passage Munro, Giussani, Merrill, and Bailey (to go no further)—all set a period after verse 9. This leaves the vocative of verses 1-2 in the air.

Now, in logic, verses 1-28 make one great sentence; in that sentence verses 1-23 constitute a long vocative. With *te* in 24, not with *te* in 6, the predicate of the sen-

tence begins, in logic. The statements in 6-9 the poet makes not for their own sake, but as part of the grounds on which he purposes, presently, when he has fully won Venus's interest, to appeal to her to bestow *aeternus lepor* on his verses (28). The words *te, dea . . . saecla propagent* (6-20) elaborate *caeli . . . lumina solis* (2-5), and are a subordinate part of the vocative. Verse 21 is resumptive of verses 3-5. In verse 21 either *quae* or *quoniam* might, in logic, be omitted. Both are used because the poet is striving hard, consciously or unconsciously, to set his readers straight concerning the syntax and the sense of the invocation. *Quae* exactly reproduces *quae . . . quae* of 3, but, since it is so far away from the vocative it modifies, it might well have seemed to the poet himself unclear and weak. *Quoniam* makes plain the fact that the statements in 21-23, which sum up and restate 2-20, constitute the grounds of the poet's appeal to the goddess for aid in his great task; it helps us realize better that verse 1 as a whole, *alma* in verse 2, and the relative clauses in 2-5 constitute grounds for the poet's appeal. Further, in this restatement in 21-23, *sine . . . exoritur* repeats closely, in sense and language both, *visitque exortum lumina solis*, 5.

The main point, then, to grasp in interpreting this passage is that, after such a vocative as we have in 1-2, considered alone, or in 1-5, considered alone, or in 1-23, taken as a whole, we expect an imperative of direct appeal to the goddess. For this the poet substitutes at first, in 24-27, a statement of his attitude toward the goddess; then, at last, in 28, he gives us the imperative for which, since his first words in 1, we have been waiting. If we grasp this connection of the passage as a whole, we shall, without hesitation, set a comma after *caelum*, 9, and commas after verses 13 and 16 (*primum*, 12, *inde*, 14, and *denique*, 17, introduce the three parts of the *nam*-clause, which covers 10-20). C. K.

DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION IN THE TEACHING OF THE CLASSICS¹

When the earliest beings, to whom might have justly been applied the adjective 'human', made their first attempts to communicate with other beings of a similar kind, it is fair to suppose that they made use of signs, and various grunts and gutturals, even if the precise

¹An address delivered at a meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, Baltimore, April 30, 1920. [This paper is reprinted from *Teachers College Record* 21, 217-237, May, 1920, with only such changes as are necessary to make it conform to the style sheet of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY. I have, with Professor Lodge's consent, appended, in footnotes, a remark or two. C. K.]

nature of these sounds has eluded the keenest of linguistic investigators from Psammetichus down. From these rudimentary beginnings were developed the highly inflected languages which were in practically universal use some centuries before the Christian era. The more we study these languages the more astounded we become at the marvelous ingenuity and intellectual resource displayed in devising such instruments of expression. When we think of languages showing ten or more cases for their nouns and verbs fully developed in voice, mood, and tense, all the different forms distinguished by variations in stem or termination or both, with careful measurements of quantity and minute attention to phonetic laws, we rightly wonder whether the human mind has really progressed in intellectual power, since the beginning of human existence upon the earth.

All of those marvelous devices and arrangements were made for one purpose, and only one, namely, the communication of ideas by means of sounds. No appeal was made with them to the eye. Those wonderful distinctions of quantity, which are the despair of modern students and teachers, were to be appreciated solely by the ear. And different languages then, as now, were characterized by different sound effects. Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin were as diverse in their sound effects as German, French, Italian, and English are to-day. And as to-day it may be said that he who knows German only by sight has no real appreciation of German as the expression of the German mind and nationality, so he who studies Greek or Latin without training his ear gets a very inadequate idea of these languages, not only as means of expression, but as exponents of the Greek or Roman nature.

Of course these languages did not spring fully developed into being; they grew through untold centuries of existence. During this period they were subject to all the laws of the organs of speech, and of psychological distinction. At the beginning of the historical period they were almost at the summit of their development, and the processes of growth were beginning to yield to the processes of decay. At this time a new influence began to be felt. The art of writing was coming into being. This was developed for the purpose of preserving records, or of communication between persons or regions separated in distance. But the art of writing had two effects not contemplated by its inventors. The fixing of the medium of communication involved the employment of a standard. Thus for the first time, the idea arose that a language can not be a lawless thing, but must be used according to fixed principles. The free growth of earlier times was greatly restricted, and profoundly modified. In fact language began to divide into two forms, the literary and the colloquial. These followed each its own course, the one being practically dead material, worked over and artistically molded by conscious effort, with a resultant intricate development of what was known as style, and the other like the broad,

foaming, often muddy growth of a living stream running often in defiance of the shackles of convention and law, and yet with great influence on the literary form as the great source of vocabulary, and in the last resort of usage. In the hands of a conscious artist, speaking to cultivated hearers, the literary form may itself become colloquial, but in ancient thought, the colloquial never became in any sense artistic. And it is doubtful whether the language of common speech can ever become in itself artistic, although it may well become an instrument for designing an artistic creation of a different kind.

Before the invention of writing, however, the distinction between cultivated and uncultivated people must have long been a vital one, and genius must have directed its attention to artistic composition. Taste had doubtless developed a norm of good versus less good usage and education must have occupied the minds of those who looked ahead for their children's welfare. But the means of learning and the means of imparting were only oral, and the question of style had to be left almost entirely to the circumstances in which a child was brought up. A child as fortunate as Julius Caesar could have found the well of Latin undefiled in his mother's lips. But less fortunate children had to trust to the idiosyncrasy of the hired teacher. This condition was profoundly modified by the invention of writing. The standard that was thus made possible did much to formulate usage, and teaching could devote more attention to artistic as well as correct speech.

To the Greek or Roman, interested only in the study of his own language and literature, the oral method of teaching was nearly the only one employed, not only because it was traditional, but because it was fully recognized that words are only one means of conveying meaning, and that they have often to be supplemented by gesture and look. The differences between different varieties of language, particularly as indicative of differences of national disposition and psychology, were as yet unknown to them. The Romans were, it is true, familiar with Greek, both from association and study, but it must always be remembered that to a Roman Greek was a kindred tongue, and this kinship was one not merely of syntax and form but of sound as well. When either Greek or Roman came in contact with the northern barbarian, the difference in speech was overwhelming, and struck his amazed consciousness at once. In our modern times we have the same experience, and show our surprise by laughter and jeers. In fact, it is only necessary to utter aloud the modern languages, such as German and French, to discover or at least to think to discover a profound difference in the psychology of the two peoples. Would any one ever expect to find an artistic and sensitive people in the Germans when he had heard their speech? And would any one not expect to find these very qualities when he heard the sonorous Italian? It might be invidious to speak of

our own tongue, but so good a critic as Lord Byron speaks of English as

our harsh northern whistling grunting guttural, which we're obliged to hiss and spit and sputter all

and it would hardly be too much to find in this description a fairly good portrait of John Bull himself. Still it must be remembered that Teutonic is but a minute part of the English language, and that the really expressive part of it has been drawn entirely from the Greco-Roman.

As I intimated just a little while ago, speech by means of sounds has never been regarded by mankind as a medium sufficient in itself for the conveyance of ideas. It has always been supplemented by gesture and facial expression. Words entirely neutral in themselves may have widely different meanings according to the way they are uttered. The well-known western anecdote "when you call me that, smile" is good for the whole human race, and for all time. This introduces the dramatic into speech, and must have dated from the first efforts of expression of the caveman. In Greece the education in language was restricted almost entirely to the great poets, notably Homer, whose works had to be committed to memory. This involved, of course, some practice in declamation, and we cannot imagine that the Greek boys should have declaimed Homer without due regard to the proper expression, that is to the dramatic element. Similarly, when we come to the Romans, after the earlier period, and when education came to be regarded as a worthy aim, we know that they based their training in language on a translation of the *Odyssey*, which of course the boys were made to learn by heart, to recite. This practice of recitation prevailed long after there were sufficient books for the cultivated classes, and long after the School age, for most literary writers presented their works to the criticism of the world by means of more or less public recitations. Here too the recitations must have been dramatic. Indeed we have actual indication that Vergil himself read his *Aeneid* aloud to Augustus, and to Octavia with the well-known effect. We are told, in addition, that Vergil's voice, while not very strong, was of marvelous charm.

If then great care was taken in the early training that the boys should not only speak clearly and enunciate accurately, but should also recite effectively, how much more important was this in the later training when all the efforts of education were directed to the making of a good orator. Both Greeks and Romans regarded the ability to express one's self in a public speech as the one indispensable accomplishment of a nobleman and a gentleman. And this expression involved a high degree of dramatic skill. A speech delivered as a mere series of words would never have had any effect on a Greek or Roman audience. They were used to artistic oratory and they demanded it from all who desired to impress them.

The importance of dramatic form as the form which all communication of ideas would naturally take was so

completely ingrained in the Greek consciousness that it seemed only natural for it to be used for didactic composition even when the dramatic form itself contributed little if anything to the elucidation of the subject. It was this feeling that impelled Greek philosophers like Plato to present their philosophical speculations in the form of dialogues. It was this feeling, supported by tradition, which induced Cicero to do the same thing. And it was the similarity to actual class-room experience that led the grammarians to couch their rules in the form of question and answer. One of the most interesting of these grammatical treatises from our point of view is Priscian's *Partitiones*, or the grammatical analysis of the first twelve verses of the *Aeneid*, given in the form of question and answer and showing an elaborate minuteness of grammatical technique such as we rarely see in our modern teaching, although it must be confessed that if we could imbue our pupils with half the information which Priscian clusters around the first word *arma*, for example, we would have every right to regard our work as well done. This of course is not the first of these dialogues. Two centuries earlier Donatus had used the same form in his *Ars Minor*, and it became the regular thing.

This method of presentation was dramatic only in form; there was no real dramatic feeling either felt or intended. It was merely a fashionable way of presenting information, and grew more and more dead as the centuries passed.

Towards the eighth century we find men's minds waking up to a realization of the essential deadness of such educational procedure. The chief educational figure of this period, Alcuin was selected by Charlemagne to inaugurate educational reforms, one of which was the attempt to reintroduce a semblance of life into the old devitalized 'colloquy' or 'disputation', to make teaching again a mirror of actual experience. The new innovation erred on the side of the fantastic and proved of no permanent value, although the employment of imagery and metaphor relieved the teaching from the dryness of the earlier drill.

It must be remembered that the aim of Latin teaching during the Middle Ages was primarily to teach people to speak Latin. Hence practice in speaking was essential. The formal grammatical question and answer did not meet the need as the material did not lend itself to any extended dialogue between pupil and teacher or between pupils and pupils. The necessity of dialogue however was never in question, and, following upon the innovation of Alcuin, we find attempts made to produce real dialogues worthy from their subject matter to merit the study of all. The article on Colloquies in Monroe's *Cyclopedia of Education* mentions a colloquy of Archbishop Aelfric and his pupil Aelfric Bata in the tenth century, which is well worth reading to-day. But such efforts as this were merely sporadic until the revival of learning, when owing to a recognition of the great importance of this method of imparting instruction the most famous and accomplished scholars devoted their

time to composing colloquies. The article just referred to gives as the first of the series the *Manuale Scholasticum* of about 1476 containing dialogues between University students of Heidelberg. Then follow the colloquies of Peter Mosellanus in 1518, giving very clever conversations of students at Leipzig; of Erasmus in 1519, which are well known to all of us and which have been used in Schools since their appearance; of Vives, whose *Exercitatio*, depicting in boy's conversation the life and activities of youth, was published in 1539 and had a great vogue; of Castellion, whose sacred dialogues were published in 1543 on the initiative of the Protestant reformers, and also had a wide use; and finally of Cordier, whose *Colloquia* were published in 1564, and sprung at once into a prominence which they maintained until the last century.

As has been said these colloquies were intended to teach pupils to speak Latin. With the decay of the demand for this accomplishment, the importance of these works also decayed, and the change from teaching a living language to teaching a dead one gradually came about. This change had been completely accomplished in this country by the middle of the last century, although remnants of the old employment of Latin as the language of the highest dignity still survived in places. Thus the Latin orations at the Harvard commencement persisted until a comparatively recent time, and degrees were still conferred in Latin at Columbia as late as the nineties. In Germany, too, Latin was still heard in some of the seminaries, while the Roman Church has never accepted the fact of death in spite of every effort made by philistines and classical teachers themselves to convince her, both by theory and practice.

The fact that Latin was regarded as a dead language led to the natural consequence that the study and teaching of it came to be practically nothing more than a variety of anatomical dissection. Such a study has its value in various ways. It produces accurate knowledge of the structure, and to a certain extent of the functions of the various parts. It serves to train the mind in accuracy of observation and record. But it gives no information as to the living spirit of the organism, it neglects entirely the life-giving element. This was the condition of Latin and Greek teaching during the latter half of the last century.

But there were not lacking discerning souls who perceived that this attitude of mind on the part of teachers of the Classics was suicidal. Such beginners' books as Jones' *First Lessons in Latin*, or White's *First Lessons in Greek*, whose sole aim in their own words was to lead the beginner during the first year "to master the inflections and build up a vocabulary", while excellent drill books, seemed to have lost sight entirely of the idea of 'content' and could not fail to rouse opposition at the same time that they deadened interest. And as is always the case, the culmination of the one movement is the starting point of its opposite. Hence the two books that I have referred to were the last as well as the most perfect of their kind. The demand for the infusion of

life into classical teaching grew stronger and stronger in the early eighties and ultimately resulted in the appearance of the *Beginners' Latin Book of Collar and Daniell* in 1886. It will come as a surprise to many that the authors state the aim of this book to be "to serve as a preparation for reading, writing, and to a less degree, for speaking Latin". Let me quote another paragraph from the preface to show the form that the reaction was taking:

The complaint is very common, and its justice must be acknowledged, that first Latin books are often excessively and needlessly arid and barren. Accordingly an effort has been made, while following a rigorously scientific method in the development of the successive subjects, to impart something of attractiveness, interest, freshness and variety to the study of the elements of Latin by means of the *colloquia*, the choice of extracts for translation, etc.

This book had a great vogue for a number of years. How much use was made of the *colloquia*, however, I do not know, but I am inclined to think that most teachers either did not use them at all, or, if they did, used them simply as new reading matter instead of having them recited, as was undoubtedly the intention of the authors².

The attempt to impart life to the teaching of the Classics was continuous for the next twenty years, although it was directed more to content than to method of presentation. In fact, the use of oral Latin seemed to have dropped out of sight almost entirely until the beginning of definite experiments in this line in England brought the question up again and made it for a decade the most important question of the hour. Without going at all into the merits of the Direct Method, it will suffice to say that no matter of method has ever had such a far-reaching effect as this experiment in England. Almost all the beginners' Latin books published during the last fifteen years have shown the influence of the movement in the great emphasis laid on oral practice, even when they have not gone to the extent of introducing dialogues.

One of the integral elements in the Direct Method of teaching is the giving of plays, where the characters are taken by the pupils. This is, of course, not the only form that the direct teaching takes, for the telling of stories is also a part of the duties of the pupils.

Before going, however, into the details of dramatic possibilities, I should like to advert for a few minutes to another side of the question, namely, the performance of the masterpieces of Greek and Latin drama, not primarily for the purpose of instruction, but rather for the sake of propaganda. The full statistics as far as 1913 are accessible in a series of papers by Professor D. D. Hains contributed to *The Classical Journal* (Vol. 9)³. The first Greek play ever given in America was staged at Harvard on May 17, 1881. It was the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles. It is noteworthy that

²Several distinguished teachers, such as Dr. Sauveur, Dr. Arcadius Avellanus, did valiant work on similar lines but their efforts did not extend to the organized School systems.

³See *The Classical Journal* 9.189-198, 251-260, 344-353. c. k.]

the date of this performance is just at the beginning of the movement to make the teaching of the Classics more living, to which I referred a little while ago. This movement has been called the Classical Revival. It rests with us whether it was not really the last kick of a moribund subject. From this time up to 1913, according to Professor Hains, Greek plays had been given by 49 Colleges and Universities, 6 Secondary Schools and 8 Clubs: total number of plays, 125; of separate performances, 193. Latin plays had been given by 29 Colleges and Universities and 4 Secondary Schools; the number of plays was 45, of performances, 48. Also 52 other institutions had given dramatizations from Greek and Latin, Homer, Theocritus, Cicero, Caesar, and Vergil. The grand total was 300 performances of 228 plays and dramatizations by 130 institutions. This did not include professional productions, presentations of Miss Paxson's little plays to which I shall return presently, and such things as Roman dinners and entertainments. Since 1913, according to the reports given in *The Classical Journal*, 17 Greek plays and 12 Latin plays have been presented, while there have been 93 or more performances of School plays, dramatizations, and entertainments. The sharp distinction between the regular performances of the ancient plays, requiring elaborate training and equipment, and the School performances, which in many if not most cases involved comparatively small expenditures of time or money, is striking. These latter were also in the nature of propaganda, to be sure, but rather among the pupils themselves than to the outside public. And the direct result must have been to teach Latin, to interpret the authors read, and to give some study of Roman and, to a much smaller degree, Greek life and institutions. During the last four years there has been a steady decrease in the number of 'regular' performances, as was to be expected in war times, but the increase in the minor efforts is all the more remarkable.

While the performance of the great plays of antiquity must always attract the attention of the discriminating and cultivated, this rather remarkable record of the last forty years seems to have had little or no effect in mitigating the hostility of the philistines, or of stirring up to the defense of the Classics in our Schools any considerable support. It has been a *succès d'estime*, and little else. On the other hand, the work in the Schools has unquestionably had the effect for which it was intended, and has done much to meet objections on the part of critics as to the lack of coördination of ancient life and institutions with our own.

(To be concluded)

TEACHERS COLLEGE.

GONZALEZ LODGE.

REVIEWS

Source Book of the History of Education for the Greek and Roman Period. By Paul Monroe. New York: The Macmillan Company (1901). Pp. xiii + 515.

To students of the history of education, as to those in allied fields, the examination of source materials is of

the greatest importance. Nothing that is written about historical characters and documents is so satisfying or so valuable to the real student as the tangible results which those men produced, or the documents themselves.

For the use of students of education during the Greek and Roman periods Professor Paul Monroe has prepared a Source Book, containing pertinent selections from the leading thinkers who gave expression to educational theories, or outlined and perfected educational practices. The range of these selections runs from those pertaining to the earliest period of Greek education down to the *De Institutione Oratoria* of Quintilian, which summarizes educational views accepted during the latter days of the Roman Republic and the first of the Roman Empire.

In addition to an excellent selection of excerpts the book contains another valuable feature, especially useful to students who are not yet thoroughly conversant with the periods and the sources which offer an insight into them. Reference is made to the brief, pointed paragraphs, relating to the nature of the period under discussion and to the array of sources available, which precede the presentation of the sources.

These characteristics recommend the book highly to students and explain, in great measure, the long period of service it has already given.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
University of Pennsylvania.

THOMAS WOODY.

This notice, by a Professor of Educational Theory and Practice, was prepared at my request, as a supplement to Professor Woody's notice, in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 13.190, of a book by Robert R. Rusk, called *The Doctrines of the Great Educators*. It seemed worth while to bring Professor Monroe's book to the attention of readers of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*, some of whom may have missed it, since it was published before *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* began.

The book falls into two main parts: Part I, Greek Education (pages 1-326), Part II, Roman Education (327-509). The Index covers pages 510-515. In Part I we find Chapter I, Old Greek Education (1-33); Education of Women in Greece (34-50); Chapter III, The New Greek Education (51-115); Chapter IV, Greek Educational Theorists: The Historical View (116-128); Chapter V, Greek Educational Theorists: The Philosophical View (129-264); Chapter VI, Greek Educational Theorists: The Scientific View (265-294); Chapter VII, The Later Cosmopolitan Greek Education (295-326). Part II includes the following: Chapter I, Early Roman Education in General (327-345); Chapter II, The Second Period of Early Roman Education (346-354); Chapter III, Contrast Between the Earlier and Later Periods of Roman Education (355-370); Chapter IV, Survival of Early Roman Educational Ideals in the Later Period (371-385); Chapter V, The Third Period: The Hellenized Roman Education (386-420); Chapter VI, The Orator as the Ideal of Roman